

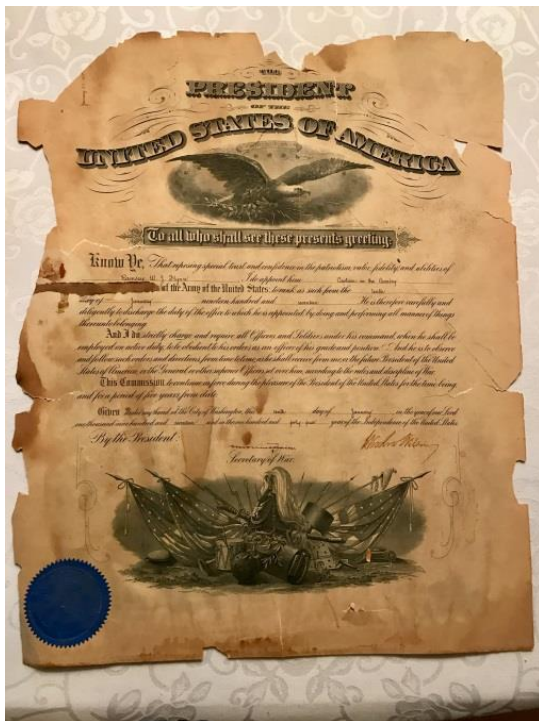


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The Flynn Brothers of Mt. Vernon: World War I Soldiers buried at St. Paul's

Reflecting commendable service, injurious sacrifice and cruel irony, the outlines of the military records and lives of two brothers from Mt. Vernon -- Ramsey William Joseph Flynn and John Cashman Flynn -- helps to illuminate the experiences of World War I soldiers buried at St. Paul's.



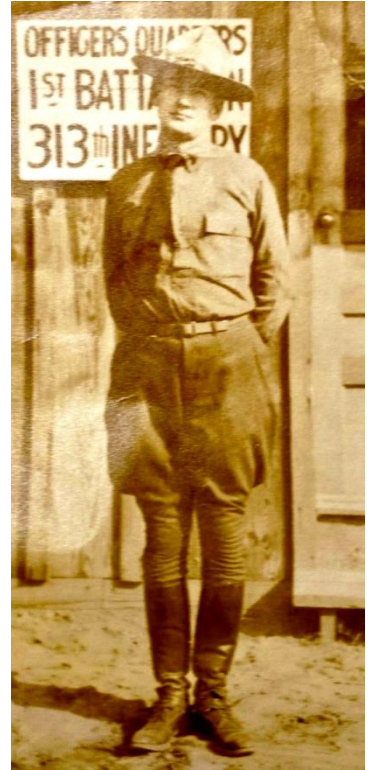
Ramsey William Joseph Flynn's commission as an Army captain, Jan. 1917, signed by President Wilson.

John, the younger brother born in 1890, was employed at an insurance company in lower Manhattan in May 1918 when he entered the army, joining Company C of the 2nd Anti-Aircraft Machine Gun Battalion. Enlistment details picture the Mt. Vernon recruit as tall, with light hair and hazel eyes. Serving in the same unit as another local soldier who was also eventually buried at St. Paul's, John Flynn reached France in July 1918, corresponding with the beginning of large scale military operations by the American Expeditionary Force (A.E.F.). Rising to the rank of sergeant, he fought at two major operations of the American army -- the St. Mihiel offensive of mid-September and the massive Meuse-Argonne campaign which lasted from late September until the armistice on November 11.

Older and more experienced in the military, Ramsey Flynn served as an Army officer in the World War. In 1916, the 30-year-old Mt.

Vernon municipal employee enlisted in a National Guard unit for the Mexican border expedition under General John J. Pershing. Commissioned a captain in early 1917, he served with the 313th Infantry regiment of the 79th Division of the regular army, joining the massive American buildup in July 1918. In the Meuse-Argonne operation, Flynn suffered an attack on November 3 from one of the lethal weapons introduced during the Great War -- poisonous gas -- leaving him severely wounded only days before the Armistice ended the fighting.

Both men returned to Mt. Vernon, joining the victorious celebrations of 1919. Professional men and active citizens, they contributed to the growth and development of the city over the next 30 years. John worked in insurance, and died in 1947, at age 57, followed by interment at St. Paul's. His older brother Ramsey married; he and his wife Mary raised a son. Ramsey was broadly involved in community activities and in veterans' affairs, and continued to serve in the army reserves while pursuing a successful business career. In a tragic accident, the former World War I officer, who had survived a German gas attack on the battlefields of Europe, succumbed to carbon monoxide gas poisoning from a faulty gas heater in his Mt. Vernon home on Feb. 26, 1947. Burial followed on the grounds of St. Paul's.



Captain Ramsey William Joseph Flynn, 313th Inf., World War I.